



St. Matthew's Primary School Homework Policy

Purposes of Homework

At St. Matthew's we believe homework can support children's learning by:

- developing an effective partnership between the school, parents and carers, giving parents and carers an opportunity to be involved in their children's learning
- consolidating and reinforcing skills and understanding, particularly in literacy and numeracy;
- using resources for learning of all kinds at home and giving children opportunities to apply their learning at home;
- extending school learning, for example through additional reading;
- encouraging pupils as they get older to develop the confidence and self discipline needed to study on their own, preparing them for the requirements of secondary school;
- fostering a love of reading.

Types of Activities that will be set for homework

- Regular reading with parents and carers continues to be essential right through primary school. This may involve looking at books together and the parent/carer reading to their child, particularly in the early stages of learning to read, as well as children reading to their parents/carers. Later on in school, this will involve children reading to themselves.
- We also wish to emphasize the value and enjoyment to be gained from children reading to parents and carers, as well as having parents/carers reading to their children, throughout their time in school. These remain excellent ways to encourage the love of reading that is so beneficial to children's education, as well as being rewarding and fun in itself.
- This is why time for regular reading is included in the examples of typical homework at the end of this policy. We feel it is important to encourage and create time for these activities, while remembering that the aim is for the reading to be enjoyable, not a chore.

Other types of activity that children may be asked to do at home, particularly as they progress through school, include:

- specific reading tasks in preparation for lessons;
- more traditional written assignments and maths activities
- preparing a presentation to the class
- finding out information
- making something
- trying out a simple scientific experiment
- research into questions generated in lessons at school
- learning lines for a play or class assembly
- occasional longer projects over a few weeks, particularly to help children prepare for secondary school

In our curriculum information sent out each term, teachers will also give information about other ways children can extend their learning at home, for example websites that children could look at or places that children can visit.

Feedback about Homework

- We believe that it is important that children receive good feedback about their homework and know that their effort is valued by their teacher.
- Not all feedback from the teacher will be written, but where a child has been asked to complete a written assignment at home, the homework will be marked by the teacher.
- Other ways that feedback may be given include:
 - Verbal feedback (e.g. on a presentation to class)
 - Feedback through class discussion (e.g. where the homework may have involved research in preparation for a presentation)
 - Children reviewing each others work in small groups
 - Feedback on an activity completed in school which their homework has contributed to (e.g. a piece of writing they have planned or researched at home)
 - Feedback on tests of their learning (e.g. spelling tests)

Expectations about children completing homework

- The school expects children to do their homework but recognize that children and families have other commitments. We firmly believe that children's leisure time is essential to their development, as is their participation in other out of school clubs and activities. Children need to be able to pursue their own interests and we do not want homework to get in the way of these.
- If you find that your child's homework is taking much longer than the typical times outlined above, please let your child's class teacher know. You can also allow your child to stop working if they have worked for the typical amount of time but have not finished all the set activities. You can sign your child's homework book to let the teacher know when you have done this.
- If a child regularly does not complete their homework, the class teacher will let parents/carers know. A child will not be punished for not completing their homework, for example by being kept in at playtime to complete their activities, unless this has first been discussed with parents/carers. The teacher may offer children who have not done their homework the opportunity to complete homework in school if the child wants to.

Meeting All children's needs

- All homework should offer a suitable level of challenge for every child and give children opportunity to succeed. Different children in the same class may have different homework activities to suit their particular learning needs.
- Homework should not take longer than the typical amounts of time outlined above (taken from the DCSF's guidance for homework).
- If children are regularly struggling to complete their homework in the allocated time, the parent should let the class teacher know as outlined above.
- Children being set extra homework over and above the allocated time is not an appropriate way to increase the level of challenge for higher attaining learners. The school believes that all children need good quality leisure time to support their development and pursue their interests. The challenge should be in the type of

homework being set (in particular in applying skills), not the amount of time spent on homework.

- Some children may have additional tasks to help them “catch up” in their learning. This should not be over and above the total time the children spend on their homework. For example, a child learning some spellings from a “catch up” programme will usually not be expected to learn another set of spellings set for other children in his or her class.

How you can help with your child’s homework

- Make sure you find out from your child what homework has been set each week and show you care that they have done it;
- Help them set up a regular routine for when and where they do their homework;
- Give them a quiet place where they can work;
- Make sure they have access to any materials they may need (pens, pencils, coloured crayons, scissors; later in school items such as a dictionary, thesaurus and a calculator may be useful);
- Be available to help and support and encourage your child where necessary
- Some homework may involve parents/carers directly, for example asking a parent to tell them about games they played at school for a history topic;
- Speak to your child’s teacher if homework causes problems for you or your child.

The Amount of time and types of activities that will be set for homework

The table below shows the typical amounts of times that homework should take and the type of activities that a parent can expect their child to do each week.

| | Typical amount of time | Typical weekly activities |
|----------------------|--|---|
| Nursery | A little and often, perhaps ten minutes per night. | Activities will not be formally set, but you can help your child’s learning and development by regularly reading to your child, playing counting games, singing nursery rhymes etc. Books can be borrowed from the Nursery library. |
| Reception | A little and often, perhaps ten minutes per night. | Focus on regular reading with your child through the week, a little and often. Also learning “tricky” words. See our leaflet ***** for ideas to help with this. |
| Years 1 and 2 | 1 hour per week | Chiefly focusing on reading, learning spellings – a little and often throughout the week. Some other literacy or maths activities as appropriate |
| Years 3 and 4 | 1½ hours per week | Reading, learning spellings and times tables – a little and often throughout the week; regular maths activities and games, occasional projects and activities from other areas of the curriculum |
| Years 5 and 6 | Up to 2½ per week | Regular reading, perhaps ten to fifteen minutes each night; other literacy and maths activities (approximately 25 minutes each); additional activities from other areas of the curriculum as appropriate |